

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG FR

SUBJECT: NEW FRENCH ENERGY OFFICIALS NAMED

REF: PARIS 3212

1. GOF HAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED SEVERAL NEW APPOINTMENTS IN ENERGY FIELD. APPOINTMENTS FOLLOW GOF DECISIONS ON NEW ENERGY PLANNING GOALS (REFTEL) AND ARE INTENDED TO STRENGTHEN GOF--SPECIFICALLY MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH--WORK TOWARD ACHIEVING THOSE GOALS.

2. MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE IS APPOINTMENT PAUL MENTRE

AS DELEGUE GENERAL FOR ENERGY, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND GOF'S TOP TECHNICAL-LEVEL POSITION FOR COORDINATION OF DOMESTIC ENERGY POLICIES. MENTRE REPLACES JEAN BLANCARD WHO HAS BECOME CHAIRMAN OF GAZ DE FRANCE. BLANCARD (WHO WAS HOLDOVER FROM LAST POMPIDOU GOVERN-

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MENT) HAS THUS SEEN APPROVED THE CONSUMPTION-REDUCTION

PROGRAM FOR WHICH HE HAS FOUGHT, BEFORE LEAVING THE GOVERNMENT TO HEAD THE GAS MONOPOLY'S IMPORTANT EXPANSION PROGRAM. MENTRE, 39 YEARS OLD, IS TECHNOCRAT FROM MINISTRY OF FINANCE WHERE HE PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN OFFICE OF THEN-MINISTER GISCARD; HE HAS MOST RECENTLY BEEN PRESIDENT OF CREDIT NATIONALE WHILE CONTINUING TO BE ACTIVE IN GISCARD'S INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN PARTY.

2. TO PUSH DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ENERGY SOURCES IN FRANCE, NEW POST HAS BEEN CREATED IN MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND JEAN-CLAUDE COLLI APPOINTED TO FILL IT. COLLI, 41, IS ALSO A MINISTRY OF FINANCE PRODUCT THOUGH HE HAS ALSO WORKED (1966-71) IN MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY'S ENERGY SECRETARIAT; HE IS ACTIVE IN LEADERSHIP OF RADICAL PARTY.

3. AS CHAIRMAN OF NEW EXPERTS' COMMISSION DESIGNED TO STUDY FRENCH LEGAL AND FISCAL REGIME FOR PETROLEUM INDUSTRY (INCLUDING ROLE OF FOREIGN COMPANIES IN SUPPLYING FRENCH NEEDS), GOF HAS APPOINTED MAURICE LAURE, PRESIDENT OF SOCIETE GENERALE. LAURE HAS HAD LONG AND DISTINGUISHED CAREER IN FRENCH FINANCIAL AND BANKING CIRCLES.

4. APPOINTMENT TO ALL THREE ENERGY POSITIONS OF TECHNOCRATS WITH FINANCIAL BACKGROUNDS (ALL ARE INSPECTEURS DES FINANCES) HAS BEEN SEEN AS EFFORT BY EX-FINANCE MINISTER GISCARD TO STRENGTHEN PRESIDENTIAL INFLUENCE IN ENERGY POLICY FORMATION. WHILE THEIR APPOINTMENTS MAY BE SOMEWHAT RESENTED IN MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (WHERE ENERGY POSTS HAVE TRADITIONALLY GONE TO CORPS DE MINES ENGINEERS), NEW APPOINTEES MAY TURN OUT TO BE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IN CARRYING OUT THEIR JOBS-- THANKS TO THE POLITICAL CLOUT WHICH THEY BRING WITH THEM.

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